

A Study to Assess the Attitudes toward Suicide among Adolescent Boys and Girls in Selected Colleges at Sri Ganganagar

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Abstract

Introduction Adolescence is a unique stage of development that occurs between the age of 11 and 20 years when a shift in growth and learning occurs. At this age, young people become self aware and concerned to know who they are and begin to consider where they want to go in life.

Adolescents suffer a feeling of loss for the childhood they leave behind, and under go arduous period of adjustment to their new adult identity. Faced with these feelings and lacking coping mechanism, adolescents can become over whelmed and turn to escapist measures such as negative attitudes towards self, others in the society and ultimately suicide.²

Material & methods

Research design: A descriptive research design

Sample: In this study, the sample consists of 60 adolescent boys and 60 Adolescent girls studying in Selected Nursing collegein Sri Ganganagar in age group of 17-20 and who fulfill the eligible criteria for the study

Tool: Structure suicide attitude scale was used to collect the data from the studysubject. Socio demographic scale consist of Age, sex, religion, education of parents, occupation of parents, income, type of family, place of residence, history of suicide in the family. A structured attitude scale was prepared consisting of 50 items on attitudes toward suicide.

Results

60%,61.7%adolescentboysandgirlsrespectivelybelongtotheagegroupof18. 8.3% boys and 15% girls belong to 17 years. 86.7% and 73.3% of adolescent boys and girls belong to Hindu religion, the remaining belong to Sikh and Muslim community. 40% of adolescent boy's fathers are graduates and 35% higher secondary level. 33.3% of the adolescent girl's father studied up to higher secondary, the remaining 21% of adolescent boys and girls fathers received post graduate qualification.43.3% adolescent boys mother had studied up to higher secondary and 48.3% of adolescent girl's mother studied up to primary level. 91.3%, 78.9% of adolescent boys and girls fathers were employed. Majority of adolescent boys and girls mother 70% and 66.7% respectively are unemployed. 55% of adolescent boys family income was found to be Rs.5001/- 10,000/- and 65% of adolescent girls family income was Rs.5000/-. Adolescent boys and girls of 53.3% and 50% respectivelybelong to nuclear family system. The remaining belong to joint and extended family. 88.5% and 75% of adolescent boys and girls reside in their homes.

Attitudes of adolescent boys and girls towards suicide

1. 40% of adolescent boys and girls have positive attitude against suicide. 55% and 58.3% have neutral attitudes towards suicide remaining 5% and 1.7% have negative attitudes.
2. The mean % score of adolescent boys and girls were 77.7% and 78.7% indicating that they are againstsuicide.
3. It was found that the attitude of boys and girls towards suicide did not differ statistically.

Association between the adolescent boys and girls towards suicide with selected demographic variables

No significant association was found between the socio demographic variable like age, religion, education qualification of parents, occupation of parents, income of the family, type of family, and place of the residence and attitude scores of adolescent boys and girls.

Key words: Suicide; Attitude; and Adolescents.

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I. Introduction

Life is full of risk, people must choose the amount of danger to which they are willing to expose themselves. A number of factors combine to impact adolescent risk taking behavior including age, gender, self-esteem, autonomy, social adaptation, vulnerability, impulsivity and thrill seeking activity.¹

The word suicide has its origin in Latin "sui", of oneself and "cudium", from caedere, to kill: the act of

intentionally destroying one's life. The word suicide first used by sir Thomas Brown in 1642 in his "Religiomedici" has evoked a variety of reaction in public minds³.

Suicide is not a disease in general, but it probably involves an individual's tortured and tunneled logic in a state of inner – felt, into health problem accountably. Out of all deaths over the past 15 years the over all suicide rate has increased from two fold to threefold.

II. Research Methodology

Research Approach: A survey approach was considered appropriate for the present study.

Research Design: A descriptive research design was chosen for the comparative study to assess the attitudes toward suicide among adolescent boys and girls in selected colleges at Sri Ganganagar.

Setting of the study: The study was conducted at selected nursing Colleges.

Population: The target population of the study is all adolescent boys and girls studying in Selected Nursing colleges.

Sample: In this study, the sample consists of 60 adolescent boys and 60 Adolescent girls who are studying in Selected Nursing collegein Sri Ganganagar.

Sampling Technique: Purposive sampling technique.

Description of the Tool

The research develops a structured attitude scale, which contains items of the following aspects

Section – I

Socio- demographic variables

Consist of Age, sex, religion, education of parents, occupation of parents, income, type of family, place of residence, history of suicide in the family.

Section – II

Structured attitude scale on suicide

A structured attitude scale was prepared consists of 50 items on attitudes toward suicide.

III. Results

SECTION –I

Distribution of subject according to demographic variables

This section deals with the demographic characteristics of the subjects. The data pertaining to the demographic variables of subjects include age, religion, education of father, education of the mother, employment of the father, employment of the mother, income of the family, type of family and place of residence.

Table -1
Distribution of subject by age and sex
(N=120)

S. N.	Age	Boys		Girls		χ^2	P-Value
		n	%	n	%		
1	17	5	8.3	9	15.0	1.92	P=0.059 NS
2	18	36	60.0	37	61.7		
3	19	11	18.4	8	13.3		
4	20	8	13.3	6	10.0		
	Total	60	100	60	100.0		

The above table represents age and sex distribution of the adolescent boys and girls. The table reveals, that 60% of boys are of 18yrs of age, remaining 18.4%, 13.3% and 8.3% are of 19yrs, 20yrs and 17yrs respectively. In contrast to this 61.7% of the girls are of 18 years of age, the remaining 15%, 13.3%, 10% of the girls are of the age 17 years, 19 years, 20 years. The chi square value is not significant.

Table -2
Distribution of subject by religion
(N=120)

S. No	Religion	Boys		Girls		χ^2	P-Value
		n	%	n	%		
1	Hindu	52	86.7	44	73.3	3.33	P=0.19 NS
2	Sikh	5	8.3	10	16.7		
3	Muslim	3	5.0	6	10.0		
	Total	60	100.0	60	100.0		

Table 2 reveals that religion and sex distribution, 86.7% of boys are Hindus in contrast to 73.3% of adolescent girls. The remaining 8.3% and 5% of the boys are Sikh and Muslim respectively, where as 16.7% of girls are Sikhs and 10% of girls are Muslims. The obtained chi square value is not significant.

Table -3
Distribution of subject by education of father
(N=120)

S. No	Education	Boys		Girls		χ^2	P-Value
		n	%	n	%		
1	Primary	7	11.7	14	23.3	9.38	P<0.03 Sig
2	Higher Secondary	21	35.0	23	38.3		
3	Graduate	24	40.0	10	16.7		
4	Post graduate and above	8	13.3	13	21.7		
	Total	60	100.0	60	100.0		

The distribution of subject, education of father is given in table 3. 40% of the adolescent boy's fathers are graduates and 35% of them have studied up to higher secondary school. Only 11.7% of them are of primary education and 13.3% obtained post graduate education. Where as 38.3% of adolescent girls father have studied up to higher secondary, 23.3% are having primary education. 16.7% of them are graduates and 20.7% have obtained post-graduate degree. The chi square value is less than 0.05 indicating level of significant statistical difference in relation to adolescent boys and girls father education.

Table -4
Distribution of subject by education of mother
(N=120)

S. No	Education	Boys		Girls		χ^2	P-Value
		n	%	n	%		
1	Primary	17	28.3	29	48.3	12.28	P<0.01 Sig
2	Higher Secondary	26	43.3	17	28.3		
3	Graduate	14	23.3	5	8.3		
4	Post graduate and above	3	5.0	9	15.0		
	Total	60	100.0	60	100.0		

The above table reveals education of mother 43.3% of the adolescent boys mother are Higher secondary and 28.3% of them are studied up to Primary school. Only 23.3% of them are Graduates and only 5% obtained post graduate education. Where as 48.3% of adolescent girls mother are studied up to Primary, 28.3% are having Higher Secondary education. 15% of them are post graduates and 8.3% are obtained graduated degree. The chi square value is less than 0.05 indicating level of significant statistical difference in relation to adolescent boys and girls mother's education.

Table -5
Distribution of subject by occupation of father
(N=120)

S. No	Occupation	Boys		Girls		χ^2	P-Value
		n	%	n	%		
1	Employed	55	91.7	47	78.3	12.28	P<0.01 Sig
2	Unemployed	5	8.3	13	21.7		

	Total	60	100.0	60	100.0		
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Table 5 denotes the distribution of subjects by occupation of father. Majority 91.7% of the boys father are employed where as 78.3% of girls father also employed only 8.3% of boys father are unemployed where as with regard to adolescent girls 21.7% of their father are unemployed. The chi square value is less than 0.05 indicating significant statistical difference among occupation level of adolescent boys and girlsfather.

Table -6
Distribution of subject by occupation of mother
(N=120)

S. No	Occupation	Boy		Girls		χ^2	P-Value
		N%		n	%		
1	Employed	18	30.0	20	33.3		P=0.69
2	Unemployed	42	70.0	40	66.7	12.28	NS
	Total	60	100.0	60	100.0		

The above table describes the distribution of subjects by occupation of mother. 70% boys and majority 66.7% girl's mothers are unemployed. About 30% of boys and 33.3% of girl's mothers are employed. The chi square value indicates the subjects gender in relation to occupation of their mother is not significant.

Table -7
Distribution of subject by monthly income
(N=120)

S. No	Income	Boy		Girls		χ^2	P-Value
		N%		n	%		
1	5000 or less	20	33.3	39	65.0		
2	5001-10000	33	55.0	18	30.	12.13	P<0.01
3	>10000	7	11.7	3	5.0		Sig
	Total	60	100.0	60	100.0		

Table 7 denotes the distribution of subjects by monthly income. 65% of adolescent girls, family income is Rs. 5000 or less. Where as in relation to boys family income 33.3%. In contrast to this 55% of the boys family income and 30% of girls family income falls between Rs 5001-10000. Only 11.7% of boy's family income and 5% of girl's family income falls more than Rs 10000 only. The results of the chi square value shows there is significant statistical difference. Then the distribution of subjects monthly income of the family at p=0.01.

Table -8
Distribution of subject by type of family
(N=120)

S. No	Type of Family	Boys		Girls		χ^2	P-Value
		n	%	n	%		
1	Joint	22	36.7	18	30.0		P=0.29
2	Nuclear	32	53.3	30	50.0	2.46	NS
3	Extended	6	10.0	12	20.0		
	Total	60	100.0	60	100.0		

The above table indicates the distribution of subjects by type of family almost equal no ie, 53.3% of boys and 50% of girls belong to nuclear family and 36.7% of boys and (30%) of girls belongs to joint family and the remaining 10% of boys, 20% of girls belongs to extended family. The chi square value indicates that the difference is not statistically significant.

Table -9
Distribution of subject by place of residence
(N=120)

S.No	Place of Residence	Boys		Girls		χ^2	P-Value
		N%		n	%		
1	Home	45	75.0	53	88.3	3.56	P=0.06
2	Hostel/Relatives house	15	25.0	7	11.7		
Total		60	100.0	60	100.0		

The distribution of subjects by place of residence is indicated in table 9. 83.3% of girls and 75% of boys resides in home where as 25% of boys and 11.7% of girls resides in hostel/relatives home. The difference is not statistically significant as per the chi square value indicated in the table.

SECTION – II

Finding and comparison of attitude scores of adolescent boys and girls towards suicide

For the purpose of analyzing gender wise response of subjects towards their attitude on suicide. These scores are categorized as follows. Below 100 as negative attitude 101-120 as neutral attitude Respond score more than 120 positive attitude this is based on the Likert Scale scores agree-3, uncertain-2, disagree-1. The categorization is done based on the percentage of correct responses given by the subjects for each item of the attitude scale and comparing with the median score (117.5)

Table 10
Percentage distribution of attitude score of adolescent boys towards suicide

N=60

S.No	Category	Attitude Score	Boys	
			n	%
1	Positive attitude	Above 120	24	40.0
2	Neutral attitude	101-120	33	55.0
3	Negative attitude	Below 100	3	5.0

Median = 117.5 Reveals that 33 (55%) are having neutral attitude towards suicide, 24 (40%) of boys are having positive attitudes and only 3 (5%) of boys are having negative attitudes. The result of the table-10 shows the adolescent boys are having or significant positive attitude against suicide.

Table 11
Percentage distribution of attitude score of adolescent girls towards suicide

N=60

S.No	Category	Attitude Score	Boys	
			n	%
1	Positive attitude	Above 120	24	40.0
2	Neutral attitude	101-120	35	58.3
3	Negative attitude	Below 100	1	1.7

Median = 117.5 The distribution of attitude score of adolescent girls are shown in the above table 11, majority 35 (58.3%) of the girls are having neutral attitudes and 24 (40%) of them are having positive attitudes against suicide. Only 1 i.e. (1.7%) of the girl having negative attitudes. This result shows the adolescent girls having significantly favorable attitude against suicide.

Table 12
Comparison of boys and girls attitude towards suicide with percentage distribution

(N=120)

S.No	Category	Attitude Score	Boys		Girls		χ^2	P Value
			n	%	n	%		
1	Positive Attitude	Above 120	24	40	24	40	1.06	P=0.59 NS
2	Neutral Attitude	101-120	33	55	35	58.3		
3	Negative Attitude	Below 100	3	5	1	1.7		
Total			60	100	60	100		

Median=117.5

Table-12 describes the attitude of adolescent boys and girls towards suicide.

58.3% of girls and 55% of the boys are having neutral attitudes towards suicide equal number of boys and girls 40% are having positive attitudes against suicide only 3 boys 5% and 1 girl 1.7% are having negative attitudes. The Chi square value indicates that there will be no statistical difference between boys and girls in their response against attitudes on suicide. This indicates that the boys and girls are having similar kind of attitude towards suicide.

Table 13
Overall Attitude scores in means, mean % and standard deviation of boys and girls

S.NO	Sex	Mean	Mean%	SD
1	Boys	116.5	77.7	11.95
2	Girls	118.03	78.7	7.81

Table 13 denotes the mean, mean%, and SD related to attitudinal scores of adolescent boys and girls. The mean% score towards attitude of adolescent boys and girls is calculated and it shows the boys and girls mean% score over 77.7% and 78.7% respectively and the mean score of boys and girls is 116.5 and 118.03 respectively. Considering the fact if the boys and girls are responded 100% positively (for all the items). Then they have 100% perfect attitudes against suicide. The table results show that the adolescent boys and girls have reasonably good/favorable attitude towards their lives. This means they do not encourage suicide

Table 14
Comparison of attitude score in mean, mean% and SD
(N=120)

S.NO	Sex	Mean	SD	t Value	P Value
1	Male	116.5	11.95	0.83	P=0.41
2	Female	118.03	7.81		NS

The above table reveals mean standard division scores on attitude of adolescent boys and girls. When the mean attitude scores between boys and girls are compared using student “t” test it was found that there uses no statistically significant difference (t=0.83, P=0.41) among boys and girls towards theirattitudes

SECTION III

Table 15
Association between attitude scores and demographic variables

S.NO	Demographic Variable	≤ Median	> Median	χ ²	P Value
1	Age (in Years) 17 18 19 20	6	8	2.87	P=0.41 NS
		38	35		
		7	12		
		9	5		
2	Religion Hindu Sikh Muslim	44	52	4.04	P=0.13 NS
		9	6		
		7	2		
3	Education of Father Prim/H. Secondary Graduate and above	37	28	2.72	P=0.10 NS
		23	32		
4	Education of mother Prim/H. Secondary Graduate and above	46	43	0.39	P=0.53 NS
		14	17		
5	Occupation of father Employed Unemployed	52	50	0.26	P=0.61 NS
		8	10		
6	Occupation of mother Employed Unemployed	21	17	0.62	P=0.43 NS
		39	43		
7	Income				

	≤ 5000	33	26	1.79	P=0.41 NS
	5001-10000	22	29		
	>10000	5	5		
8	Type of family				
	Joint	21	19	0.16	P=0.92 NS
	Nuclear	30	32		
Extended	9	9			
9	Residence				
	Home	48	50	0.23	P=0.89 NS
	Hostel	5	4		
Relative House	7	6			

Table 15 denotes the association of selected demographic variables of adolescent boys and girls with their attitudes towards suicide. The chi-square was computed taking the median score of adolescent boys and girls \leq median and $>$ median scores. It was found that the association between demographic variables, age, religion, education of father and mother, occupation of father and mother, income of the family, type of the family and place of residence was found statistically not significant.

IV. Discussion

Section-I

The results based on the background details of adolescent boys and girls reveal that the mean age of adolescent boys and girls being 18.28 and the range of adolescent boys and girls being 17-20. 60% boys and 61% girls are age 18yearsold. Studyconducted by Lalwani S showed that out of 222 cases 123 i.e. 54% were girls (female: male:: 1.24 : 1)

As per religious issues is concerned 86.7% of the boys and 73.3% of girls were Hindus; 5% boys and 10% girls were Muslims; 8.3% boys and 6.7% girls were Sikhs; this is due to the predominance of Hindu religion in India as per senses data. With respect to the education 40% of boys father and 16.7%of girls father were graduates. Only 13.3% of boy's father and 21.7% of girl's father were possessing degrees of postgraduate and above however about 17.7% of boy's father 25.3% of girl's father were having primary education. As per the education of the adolescent boys and girls mother was concerned about 23.3% of boys mother and 8.3% girls mother were graduate and only 5% of boys father and 15% girls father possessed post graduate education. Education status of the parent of adolescent boys and girls indicate higher role of literacy level and considerable "percentage of parents of adolescent boys and girls possess graduatedegree.

As per the occupation of the parents of the adolescent boys and girls were concerned majority of 91.7% of boys father and 78.3% girls father were employed.70% of boys mother and 66.7% girls mother were unemployed. This shows that the fathers of adolescent boys were employed compared to the mother of the subjects. The monthly income of the subjects family was concerned majority 55%of adolescent boys family income ranges from Rs.5001/- to 10,000, the mean income of the family is Rs.6702.

With regards to the family types of the subjects 53.3% of boys and 50% of girl's family belongs to nuclear family. As per place of residence was considered 58.3% of girls and 75% of boys come from their home. Only 25% of boys and 11.7% of girls reside in hostel/relatives home.

Section-II

The overall attitude score was categorized into below 100 as a negative attitude 101 to 119 as neutral and scores above 120 positive attitude taking into consideration the median score(117.5) 40% of adolescent boys and girls have positive attitude against suicide and 55% of boys and 53.83% of girls have neutral attitudes. Only 1 that is 1.7% adolescent girls, 5% of adolescent boys have negative attitude (table 10 and11).

The boys and girls didn't differ in their attitude towards suicide. Chi square results ($\chi^2=1.06$, $p=0.59$) the mean percentage of boys and girls where 77.7%, 78.7% and SD 11.99, 7.81 respectively indicate majority of adolescent boys and girls havefavorable attitude against suicide meaning that, they are not in favor of considering suicide as a mean for achieving life goals (table 13). The mean square value of boys and girls in relation to the SD did not show any difference among attitudes. Adolescent boys and girls based on student "t" test ($t=0.83$, $p=0.41$) this shows that the adolescent boys and girls are have similar kinds of attitude towards suicide (table 14). Hence the hypothesis shows that there was no significant statistical difference in adolescent boys and girls towards suicide. This was substantiated by the study conducted by McAlliffe C one attitude towards adolescent boys andgirls.

Section-III

In the present study the association between attitude scores and selected demographic variables of adolescent boys and girls were studied to find out if any association exists between attitude scores of subjects and their demographic variables. The Chi square results show that there was no significant statistical association between attitude scores and demographic variables such as age, religion, education of father and mother, occupation of father and mother, income of the family, type of the family and place of residence. Indicating that the demographic variables did not influence the attitude of the adolescent boys and girls towards suicide and this may be due to the fact that the adolescent is in the state of turmoil and facing identity crisis in their lives and this many factors fail to influence them (table 15). The hypothesis, there will be no significant association with selected social demographic variables with attitude of boys and girls was accepted.

V. Conclusion

Adolescents are an important group of any community/country. Adolescents need to be supported physically, psychologically and socially in order to maintain their health. Since adolescents represent one fifth of India's population, mental health professionals particularly psychiatric nurses play a vital role in the promotion of mental health in adolescents. In view of the rising suicidal attempts and suicide among adolescents, the present study and its results provided an important feedback for the promotion of the health of adolescents.

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